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# PROTECTIVE CASE FOR PORTABLE COMPUTER

## CLAIM OF PRIORITY

This application makes reference to, incorporates the same herein, and claims all benefits accruing under 35 U.S.C. § 119 from an application for A CASE FOR A PORTABLE COMPUTER earlier filed in the Korean Industrial Property Office on Dec. 2, 1998 and there duly assigned Ser. No. 1998/52631.

## BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

### 1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates generally to a protective case for a portable computer and, more particularly, to a protective case having an elastic member holding a portable computer.

### 2. Description of the Related Art

Various types of cases have been used for protecting a portable computer. Typically, the portable computer is inserted into a carrying case or a brief case for the purpose of the protection. The cases are designed to accommodate and protect the portable computer when the portable computer is fully inserted into and completely covered by the case.

The design of the portable computer has been continuously evolved. The faster, smaller and more versatile the computer becomes, the more widely the computer is used. The computer including a specific function such as word processing, data collection, or item identification may be all-purpose machines capable of computing and running a variety of types of software programs. These portable personal computers may interact with a variety of portable and stationary peripheral input/output devices such as printers, light pens, image scanners, video scanners, recordable memories and new cameras. Moreover, these computers may have an electric power cord for receiving power from a standard electric outlet as well as a battery pack for powering the unit when an electric outlet is unavailable or is inconvenient. The portability and versatility of portable computers, in combination with the ever reduced size and weight of these machines, has attracted a significant number of users.

Nevertheless, the cases protecting the portable computer are not small, light, and effective enough to cover, carry, and protect the portable computer. I have found that with conventional apparatus and methods, it is not possible to a more perfect protective case for protecting and covering the portable computer.

Efforts to protect the portable computer has spawned various types of carrying cases. For example, U.S. Pat. No. 5,835,344 for a Portable Computer System With Integral Carrying Case issued to Alexander discloses an integral multi-purpose carrying case. U.S. Pat. No. 5,632,373 for a Protective Case for Portable Computer issued to Kummar at al. proposes a protective case for housing a portable computer and including a key board case and a display case, while U.S. Pat. No. 5,485,922 for a Portable Computer Carry Case Assembly issued to Butcher shows a portable computer carry case including several compartments. U.S. Pat. No. 5,325,970 for a Carrying Case for Portable Computers issued to Dillon at al. contemplates a computer carrying case containing non-reflective folding panels and U.S. Pat. No. 5,160,001 for a Computer Carrying Case issued to Marceau suggests a soft combination briefcase and

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carrying case for suspending the computer unit in the central zone of the carrying case. U.S. Pat. No. 5,074,413 for a Carrying Case issued to Ikuta et al. uses a carrying case having a grip portion and interior accommodating accessories. I have noticed that the embodiments described by these references fail to show a case that is both small and lighter weight while effective enough to cover and protect the portable computer.

U.S. Pat. No. 5,607,054 for a Folio Carrying Case for Notebook Computer issued to Hollingsworth discloses a carrying case having front and back panels, a top panel, a bottom panel, a closure flap, and a pair of tabs serving as a computer stand when in the open position while U.S. Pat. No. 5,002,184 for a Soft Case Protection for a Hand Held Computer issued to Lloyd shows a soft case including a base cover portion and a top cover portion having a flat, soft form pad engaging the glass screen of the monitor. I have found that these embodiments do not provide a soft and light weight, small case for covering and protecting the computer and that it is difficult and often inconvenient to use the conventional case for carrying a relatively small portable computer in consideration of the recently developed portable computers such as palm top and lap top computers that remains relatively lightweight and compact in size.

## SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of the present invention to provide an improved case for protecting a portable computer.

It is another object to provide a case able to cover a portable computer.

It is yet another object to provide a case that is sized to fit a light weight portable computer.

It is still another object to provide a compact case for covering the portable computer.

It is still yet object to provide a case hold the portable computer tightly.

It is further object to provide a case for covering the portable computer with a rigid, elastic portion and a soft, flexible portion.

It is also an object to provide a case capable of being easily attached to and removed from the portable computer.

These and other objects may be achieved by providing a light and flexible protective case for covering, protecting, and holding a portable computer such as a palm top computer, a notebook computer, or a lap top computer having an upper surface and a lower surface separated by at least one side surface. The protective case includes a first surface, a second surface, a connecting member and a plurality of elastic members. The first surface covers the upper surface of the portable computer while the second surface covers the lower surface of the portable computer and the connecting member covers at least one side surface of the portable computer and connects the first surface and the second surface together. A plurality of elastic members are inserted into the connecting member to enforce the connecting member to be attached to and to hold the portable computer. The first and second surfaces and a portion of the connecting member are soft and flexible while the other portion of the connecting member to which an elastic member is attached, is bendable, flexible and elastic. The first surface, the second surface and the connecting member of the protective case are made of the leather while the elastic members are composed of at least one flexible thin sheet.

When the portable computer includes a keyboard, a display pivotally attached to the keyboard and a hinge